

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (Currently amended) A cross tie bracket attachable to a rod and a building structural element, the cross tie bracket comprising:
 - a generally cylindrical body sized to receive the rod; [[and]]
 - a base attached to the body, the base being attachable to the building structural element;
 - a first end plate disposed adjacent to a first end of the body and a second end plate disposed adjacent to a second end of the body, the first and second end plates being configured to secure the rod to the bracket; and
 - a gusset disposed between the body and the base and attached to at least one of the body, the base, and the first and second end plates;wherein the body and the base secure the rod to the building structural element.
2. (Canceled)
3. (Currently amended) The cross tie bracket of claim [[2]] 1, wherein each of said first and second end plates ~~the end plate further~~ includes a rod aperture sized to receive the rod.
4. (Original) The cross tie bracket of claim 1 wherein the body has an inner diameter sized slightly larger than an outer diameter of the rod.
5. (Original) The cross tie bracket of claim 4 wherein the body is sized and configured to have an inner surface thereof in contact with the rod when inserted therein.

6. (Original) The cross tie bracket of claim 1 further comprising at least one mounting aperture formed in the base for attaching the bracket to the building structural element.

7. (Currently amended) The cross tie bracket of claim 1 further comprising at least one screw aperture disposed in the base for temporarily securing the bracket to the building structural element with screws, nails or fasteners.

8. (Original) The cross tie bracket of claim 1 further comprising at least one drill guide pin alignment aperture for aligning a drill guide over the bracket.

9. (Currently amended) The cross tie bracket of claim 1 ~~further comprising a gusset disposed between the body and the base, the gusset being~~ wherein said gusset is sized and configured to locate the body a prescribed distance above the base.

10-12. (Canceled)

13. (Original) The cross tie bracket of claim 1 wherein the bracket is configured to be used as a drill guide for another cross tie bracket.

14-48. (Canceled)

49. (New) A method of drilling a hole in a structural element by use of first and second cross tie brackets, each of said cross tie brackets including a generally cylindrical body sized to receive a rod; a base attached to the body, said body including at least one mounting aperture, a plurality of screw apertures, and at least one drill guide pin alignment aperture; a first end plate disposed adjacent to a first end of the body and a second end plate disposed adjacent to a second end of the body, the first and second end plates being configured to secure the rod to the bracket; and a gusset disposed between the body and the base and attached to at

least one of the body, the base, and the first and second end plates, said method comprising:

providing the structural element;

securing the first cross tie bracket to said structural element with at least one screw through said screw apertures thereof;

providing at least one drill guide pin that has two ends, each said end of said pin being insertable in said drill guide pin alignment aperture;

mounting the second cross tie bracket over said first cross tie bracket by inserting respectively said two ends of said drill guide pin in said drill guide pin alignment apertures of said first and second cross tie brackets thereby aligning said mounting apertures of said first and second cross tie brackets;

securing the second cross tie bracket over said first cross tie bracket with at least two screws extending through said screw apertures of both said first and second cross tie brackets; and

drilling a hole in the structural element by inserting a drill bit through the aligned mounting apertures.